

MASSACHUSETTS PLOUGHMAN.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY, FOR THE BENEFIT

OF FARMERS AND MECHANICS, AT QUINCY HALL, SOUTH

MARKET STREET. WM. BUCKMINSTER, OF FRAMINGHAM, EDITOR.

VOL. 8.

PUBLISHED BY

W. & W. J. BUCKMINSTER.

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AGRICULTURE.

TO OUR OLD FRIENDS AND PATRONS.

With the first week in October we commence the EIGHTH VOLUME of the *Massachusetts Ploughman*.

Our thanks are due to the patrons of this paper, which was commenced to supply a deficiency which was felt for the want of a Common Sense Journal that should give practical hints and lessons to young farmers, while it should stimulate the older ones to better practices in order to arrive at better results.

It was felt that a *Family Paper* was needed that should circulate the most interesting items of reading, Foreign and Domestic—that should give an impartial, general account of the Political Proceedings of the week in decent and civil language. Not substituting hard names for argument, but treating all parties of men with civility, and standing with candor the points in dispute.

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It is true there is a class of men who fear to compare, but they are very forward to guess, that they have better stock at home than any which is seen at the shows. If they really have better stock than ours—and a farmer who is desirous of keeping all his own knowledge and his own improvements to himself is not the character to be held in the highest estimation.

If a farmer would be a good judge of farm stock he must see much of it—he must be familiar with the subject—he must reason upon it, and must compare the products and profits of the one with the other. His own experience of the farms and marks of cattle that prove best for the dairy, the draft, and for fattening, should be compared with that of others who have had as good opportunities as himself to the merits of the different kinds.

An independent paper, rather than a neutral, or apoposin journal, it has been our pride to sustain, and our readers must judge whether we have been faithful and true to the trust and confidence that was reposed in us in the outset.

An Agricultural paper, of the size of the *Ploughman*, filled weekly with Agricultural matter, exclusively, was not wanted. And it was thought that one page devoted to that and to the Mechanics Arts would be sufficient for the week; while the remainder of the paper should be filled with the current news, with statistical information, a faithful list of prices current; and useful articles of reading for all the members of the family.

In regard to political subjects and political parties, it has been our aim to treat all fairly. We cannot be entirely silent on them and yet give the current and most interesting news of the week.

It is the practice of some farmers to chop logic—and knows more about the stars and planets than he has once supposed that any student could know. Nothing can be done for the dairy, the draft, and the hay and grain are well protected under it. Four posts, one on each corner, are set to support the cap. The objections to this fashion are the cost of the frame and cap, and the trouble of raising it as the hay or grain is brought in; four men being a proper force to change the height of the cap.

Some farmers make oblong stacks and place covers of straw to give the water a proper cast each way from the ridge. Such stacks are placed on the north side of the cow yard, and they afford protection to the stock from the cold winds of winter.

People are naturally so wedded to their own products, as well as their own opinions, that they are slow to look abroad for knowledge. A student, under a private tutor, becomes mighty wise in the frame and cap, and the trouble of raising it as the hay or grain is brought in; four men being a proper force to change the height of the cap.

A canvass or cloth cap would cost but a trifle, for it need not be of great extent. The water will run fast enough as soon as it is turned to the sides. Farmers have not capital enough to erect many buildings, and we would rather see numerous stacks of hay around a farmer's cow yard, than to find him at a bank hiring money to pay for buildings that may be dispensed with. Stacks around a barn look better than large barns not well filled. If a man has money to waste, he may build for show; but young farmers generally need all their capital for use.

LARGE CROPS OF CORN.

The editor of the *Prairie Farmer*, published in the new city of Chicago, seems to think that one hundred and seventy bushels of corn may be grown on a single acre notwithstanding our doubts and our reasoning upon the matter.

Those editors say:—

"Now with all due deference to the opinion of the editor of the *Ploughman*, we suggest that his reasoning will not hold. The question is one of fact, on which opinion amounts to nothing. The question is, can one hundred and seventy bushels of corn be grown in Massachusetts—but that the amount specified grow in Ohio. It might as well be said that paw paws do not grow native in New England, and therefore do not in Illinois."

There is such a thing as *circumstantial evidence*—and there is *positive evidence* also. Some reject all evidence that is merely circumstantial—they must have positive evidence or none.

There is still another division or subdivision of evidence. The testimony of witnesses is sometimes *probable*. It is often *improbable*. If ten men should swear that they had measured a thousand bushels of corn, the growth of a single acre, farmers would reject the evidence as improbable. They would conclude there must be some mistake in the measure—that the witnesses were deceived.

In other cases we look to the *probability* of a story. Suppose a dozen men should swear in court they had seen a ghost in a grave yard. A good judge on the bench would incline to inquire how they knew it was a ghost? And when he had ascertained that the witnesses were as unacquainted with ghosts as himself he would not give much weight to the testimony.

We all know "this is a question of fact, on which opinion amounts to nothing." But the *fact* is not admitted—it is to be proved. No one is bound to believe all the stories he hears, though they may be sworn to. When extraneous stories are told, responsible listeners have a right to insist on more evidence, and all may say with the Apostle of the Gentiles, "Who made them to differ from another?"

We shall continue to speak freely of measures, and especially of men. We have no political party to sustain, and have no desire to crush any association of men. Political parties are indispensable in a free government. And if political discussions are not always conducted with decency, the blame must rest in part on the shoulders of the parties of *scurrilous*.

It is for the subscribers of papers to say whether the scurrilous matter with which too many party papers are filled, shall be countenanced by them. The farmers and the mechanics of the country have at their power to put a stop to language that is highly offensive to decency. Will they not agree to make it the interest of publishers to tell the truth, and to tell it in decent language?

Seven years have passed away since the commencement of the *Ploughman*; and with them have passed away many of our old friends who encouraged us in the undertaking and who stood by us in the days of trial and peril. Pense to their shades. May their descendants imitate their virtues. Seven years are no small portion of the active life of man; but seven years pass away.

Among the patrons of the *Ploughman* the farmers and the mechanics of the old town of Framingham were the most conspicuous. They set the example, and they put it in power to declare in other places that no less than two hundred subscribers had been obtained in a single week, in a town containing but about three thousand inhabitants.

And to their credit it is said that the number of our patrons has not diminished but has been constantly on the increase. Two hundred subscribers to an agricultural paper in a town of that size indicates an uncommon degree of interest taken in agriculture, and Framingham may be called the premium town.

CATTLE SHOWS AND EXHIBITIONS OF THE PRODUCTS OF THE FARMER AND THE MANUFACTURER.

It cannot now be denied that these meetings and these exhibitions are decidedly popular, and that our most intelligent and worthy citizens are giving them their countenance. And the question is asked, who opposes them? Where are found the individuals who sneer at the periodical meetings of the productive classes of the community? They are found in the holes of the *antislavery*—in the remote corners of fields where the full light of day is never seen. They are found among the opponents of improvement—the enemies of progress.

What intelligent observer can doubt that the best way of gaining knowledge is to compare the theories and practices of others with our own? It is an old maxim that "in a multitude of counsellors there is safety." It is by comparison that we correct our own errors. It is by intercourse with others that we acquire new ideas and obtain new views.

Farmers necessarily live remote from each other; they of all men, have the most need to encourage the assembling together, at convenient seasons, those who are engaged in a like pursuit. One of Aesop's fables says, "Forget not the assemblage of selves together." And when any great object is accomplished, or any improvement is to be effected of a moral, political, or agricultural character, frequent assemblages of such as are alive to the work are exceedingly important.

One farmer would hardly know how another farmer cares his hay in case no communications are made on the subject, for all are too busily engaged in the haying season, to travel, or to look abroad away from their own premises. Hence it is that horse rakes and other improved tools are used, by one farmer before a neighbor, two miles off, knows anything in fact of their operation, or of the saving of labor they occasion in that most busy season.

Much skill is requisite to select good stock for a farmer. Farmers ought to know how to buy and what to buy. But if a man sees no other than his own farm stock, he is no judge of cattle, or horses, or hogs. It is by comparison, and by that only, that we learn to distinguish the profitable from the unprofitable—the good from the worthless.

The best way of comparing is to bring stock in contact—to drive herds and flocks together, that they may be seen at once, and be judged by contrast.

Hence the propriety of Cattle Shows, and shows of all kinds of farm stock.

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MASSACHUSETTS PLOUGHMAN
SATURDAY MORNING, OCT. 7, 1848.

William Buckminster, Editor.

CATTLE SHOW, &c., AT CONCORD.

The Middlesex Society of Husbandmen and Manufacturers, held their annual meeting at Concord, on Wednesday last. The weather had been foul for a number of days previous to the show, and the number of cattle in the pens was less than usual; yet there were many worth looking at and worth keeping. But Middlesex county is too high the Capital of New England, and land is too dear to admit of the raising of as much young stock here as in Worcester county.

At the plough field, however, we found some fine working oxen, quite as good as we find in any county in the State; and the ploughing here was excellent—it was finished work, and all farmers will do well to look at such fields and compare them with the showy performances that are too often seen in fields that may be easily ploughed as these at Concord.

The officers of the Society have altered their rule here in regard to deep ploughing, and require no plough to go deeper than eight inches; while those drawn by one yoke of cattle are required to go but seven inches deep. This change is right, for our ploughs generally are not made for such deep ploughing. And when any farmer wishes to stir the soil deeper, he can use a subsoil plough, run after the common one. It costs no more to run two ploughs with one yoke of oxen attached to each, than to run a larger plough with two yokes of oxen attached to it; for when two yokes are in one team a driver is necessary. Nothing, therefore, is gained by attempting to turn the soil to the depth of ten inches by one operation. Farmers will never practice this at home, and it is idle to set a pattern that is not to be followed.

People who cultivate a clayey soil, as in Worcester, may wonder that any attempts are made to plough eight or nine inches deep. But some lands require a much greater depth than others. Sandy loams are not generally ploughed deep enough, and they suffer for lack of moisture in a dry summer.

The implements of husbandry brought for exhibition were numerous and well finished. The firm of Parker & White, from Boston, had numerous articles from their store in Blackstone street. The smaller articles of manufacture were examined by the appropriate committees, whose reports will be published.

The fore part of the day was leisure, and the number of people in attendance was not half so great as usual. Yet the dinner tables were all filled, though they were as capacious as usual.

The Society dined at the Middlesex hotel, where a good dinner was provided at a charge of fifty cents. To our taste the dinner was uncommonly good. The meat was cooked on the day previous to the show, and the provider was thus enabled not only to cook the whole in his own house, but to bring on his gravies, his potatoes, and his other vegetables, warm and fit to be eaten.

This plan, too, enabled the provider to afford his dinner at a much lower rate than we have formerly paid at Concord. Our labors, therefore, a behalf of farmers who are ashamed to be caught eating more than a half a dollar's worth of meat, have proved successful in a number

of counties. Essex county and Plymouth county adopted the new plan, and the new price, last year; but Middlesex and Worcester held back this year, Middlesex and Worcester both bring in the cold meat; and we believe the price is lowered in Worcester as well as in Middlesex.

The President of the Society, Mr. Spencer, was not present, and the task of presiding fell on the Hon. Mr. Buckingham, the first Vice President. The dinner passed off with much apparent satisfaction to all present, and sentiments were expressed at table by many individuals. We had a good supply of fruit at the table, the premium dishes being kept for the use of the Society, at dinner.

The Address to the Society was made by the Hon. J. C. Gray, of Boston, who has a summer residence in Cambridge. It was a chaste and interesting production, and gave satisfaction to the audience; though some of the farmers thought he was more familiar with English farming and English books on farming, than with modern American writings on the subject.

Humorous songs, written for the occasion, were sung by some professed singers, and occasioned much merriment. Good order was observed through the day, and the farmers and mechanics of the county have reason to be proud of their exhibition at Concord.

A prayer was offered by the Rev. Mr. Frost, who was at the dinner table also, and asked a blessing.

We hope to be able, at an early day, to publish lists of the premiums granted by the Society.

NOTE. The number of double and single teams at the ploughing match, was twenty-seven.

FRAMINGHAM CEMETERY. We are requested to state that the new Cemetery at Framingham will be consecrated on Thursday, October 12th, at ten o'clock A. M.

The sale of lots will commence immediately after the consecration.

THE LATE STORMS.—We learn that the quantity of rain that fell in the late storm, as measured at the Cambridge Observatory, was four inches. During the storm at Brooklyn N. Y. five and a quarter inches of rain fell. The late storm was very extensive, reaching probably every State in the Union. Water was much wanted at our mills.

RATHER SAUCY. On Thursday evening at Dorchester Lower Mills, Mr. Brewer was waylaid on his way home, by a villain who knocked him down, probably with the intention of seizing his trunk which he usually carries with him from his store. The Doctor's son was but a few rods from carrying the trunk, but the villain escaped.

CRIME. On Thursday morning a sea captain was knocked down in this city, on Commercial street, and robbed of his wallet.

ON looking over our lists we find a number of our subscribers who are more than a year in arrears. They will oblige us much by recollecting that we cannot go without their aid. We authorize all to send by mail, and we will bear any loss that may happen after depositing the money with a postmaster. We are in the practice of sending receipts in the next papers that are issued after payments made.

ARRIVAL OF THE CAMBRIA.

Yesterday we had accounts from the Steamer Cambria, which was on her way to Boston from Halifax. She brings accounts four days later than the late arrival at New York. No great change had taken place in the markets or among political parties. The elections in France were in progress. In England the late weather had been favorable for harvesting. And the potato crop in Britain has suffered less than last year.

The Chartist agitation seems to be entirely defunct, and it is rare that mention is ever made of it.

Considerable excitement continues to prevail in Paris, but as yet there has been no removal of disturbances. The late elections absorbed the largest share of public attention.

Prince Louis Napoleon, besides being returned for the Capital by an overwhelming majority, has also been returned for six other departments.

One communists (Raspail) and probably Fould, the banker, are also among the successful candidates in Paris.

Prince Louis received 111,192, Fould, 78,518, Raspail, 66,815, Marshal Bugeaud, 45,195, Girod, 27,507 votes.

It is believed that the result of the elections will lead to some change in the ministry. The Reactionists and Red Republicans are making efforts of assistance to Gen. Cavaignac. The Reactionists appear to be willing that General Cavaignac should be nominally President, provided they can make M. Thiers Vice-president, but not otherwise.

WHIG NOMINATIONS. At a meeting of the whig district convention at Concord, Hon. Boni Thompson of Charlestown, was nominated for the candidate for Congress, from the Fourth District, now represented by Hon. J. G. Palfrey.

At a meeting of the County Convention at Concord, the following gentlemen were nominated as candidates for the Senate, for Massachusetts, and the election was adjourned.

The French 5 per cents were last quoted at 69,000, and the 3 per cents 447,75.

The French 5 per cent, Lombardy and Austria would shortly terminate. In Paris, it was reported that a renewal of the armistice had been agreed to; but it was scarcely thought that Austria would concede the terms required for a conclusion of the war. Hence, a renewal of hostilities was to be inevitable.

Advices from Germany are of importance.

At Frankfort, on the 16th of Sept., the motion for a rejection of the armistice was rejected by a majority of 21. Thus peace in the north of Europe was assured.

In consequence of fresh disturbances in Vienna, that city had been declared in a state of siege.

BELGIUM was tranquil.

FRANCE. A letter from Paris of the night of the 19th ult. says:—

The result of the election returns are not yet officially known, but sufficient transpired to show that Louis Napoleon, Raspail, Socialist, will be returned for Paris. Not one of the soldiers comprising the army of the Alps, however, preponderated in favor of Marshal Bugeaud.

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The French 5 per cent, Lombardy and Austria would shortly terminate. In Paris, it was reported that a renewal of the armistice had been agreed to; but it was scarcely thought that Austria would concede the terms required for a conclusion of the war. Hence, a renewal of hostilities was to be inevitable.

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